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Purpose: To look into the main themes and lessons in the book *Stargirl*

Audience: Teacher and/or classmates

Genre: Assignment

Engagement: Understanding why the author, Jerry Spinelli, included specific lessons in this novel and gained new appreciations for opposing the constraints of society

As discussed in the *Pleasures* book, certain “gaps” can allow children to use their imagination and see things, such as characters, the way they want to picture them. I think that the cover of this novel does that because it uses simple symbols instead of words. Right away kids will notice that this is more unusual than the average novel and start to ponder why. Furthermore, they do not know what any of the characters look like, but by using the descriptions within the novel, they come up with their own. A quote from the book that really extends this thought, found on page 53 is, “Everyone has different ideas about the meanings of the words people share. That’s why each reader finds a different story in the same text.” The uniqueness of this book allows children to explore their individuality and embrace it.

LENS 2: *Stargirl*

Critical

**Directions: Explain how the novel *Stargirl* affected you. Relate your life to aspects of the novel, lessons learned, and how it made you feel. Might you react differently in certain situations after completing this book?**

**Then, create a poster using your favorite inspirational quotes from the novel. Express yourself creatively and use whatever sources necessary to complete this task (magazines, pictures, drawings, etc.).**

In my opinion, Jerry Spinelli addressed some extremely important topics for young adults. He created a unique character that had a heart of gold, but not a selfish bone in her body. Growing up, school is a major part of life and being rejected by peers is so hurtful. Because Stargirl is different, she is looked down upon, but it does not hinder her spirit one bit. She brought so much life to Mica High School that went unappreciated and she ended up trying to change for her boyfriend, Leo. She tried to alter herself to make someone happy. It is one of the most important lessons in this novel because it proves that you cannot change who you truly are, and any body that really loves you would not ask you to in the first place. While it is sad that Stargirl and Leo do not end up together at the end of the story, I think it is set up that way to show that Leo made a mistake by trying to make Stargirl “normal.” Nobody should ever try to change someone’s spirit.

This novel relates to me in a variety of different ways. We are all trying to figure out who we really are, but with all the fads and peer pressure, are we being true to ourselves? In school, there are many social roles that kids want to be a part of and fit in to. Young adults conform to fit specific molds instead of showing who they really are. Stargirl is a wonderful example that expressing yourself is a wonderful gift to those around you and teaches us how hurtful it is to shun people just because they are unique. It has inspired me to resist peer pressure and be myself, 100% original.

“When a stargirl cries, she does not shed tears, but light.” (181)







“In our minds we tried to pin her to a corkboard like a butterfly, but the pin merely went through and away she flew.” (15)



NEVER LET ANYBODY DULL YOUR SPARKLE.

“She taught me to revel. She taught me to wonder. She taught me to laugh.” (107)



“Star people are rare. You will be lucky to meet another.” (177)